

108
Greatest Of All Times



**Globally selected
Personalities**

“There is no disgrace
in honest failure;
there is disgrace
in fearing to fail.”

- Henry Ford



30 Jul 1863 <::><::><::> 7 Apl 1947

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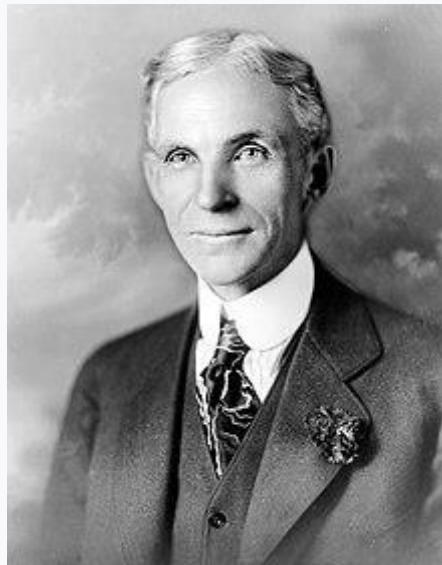
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30 Jul 1863




7 Apr 1947

Henry Ford



Portrait by [Fred Hartsook](#), c. 1919

Born	July 30, 1863 Springwells Township, Michigan , U.S.
Died	April 7, 1947 (aged 83) Dearborn, Michigan , U.S.
Resting place	Ford Cemetery, Detroit, Michigan
Occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engineer• industrialist• publisher• philanthropist
Years active	1891–1945
Known for	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Founding and leading the Ford Motor Company• Pioneering a system that launched the mass production and sale of affordable automobiles to the public

Title	President of Ford Motor Company (1906–1919, 1943–1945)
Political party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Republican (1881–1918) • Democratic (1918–1947)
Spouse	Clara Jane Bryant
	(m. 1888)
Children	Edsel
Family	Ford
Awards	Elliott Cresson Medal (1928)
	Signature
	



Henry Ford with Thomas Edison and Harvey S. Firestone.
Fort Myers, Florida, February 11, 1929.



A 1926 Ford T Roadster
on display in India



14 Jan 1935

Henry Ford

Founder, Ford Motor Company

<https://www.thehenryford.org/explore/stories-of-innovation/visionaries/henry-ford/>

<https://corporate.ford.com/articles/history/henry-ford-biography.html>

Retired curator of transportation at The Henry Ford, Bob Casey admits that he is fascinated with the way Ford approached life. "He was one of these people who didn't take a job because he knew how to do it," says Casey during this lengthy video interview. "He often took jobs because he didn't know how to do them, and they were opportunities to learn. It's a very gutsy way to learn."

“Be ready to revise any system, scrap any method, abandon any theory, if the success of the job requires it.”

<<< Henry Ford

His Early Life as an Inventor

Henry Ford did not invent the automobile. He didn't even invent the assembly line. But more than any other single individual, he was responsible for transforming the automobile from an invention of unknown utility into an innovation that profoundly shaped the 20th century and continues to affect our lives today.

Innovators change things. They take new ideas, sometimes their own, sometimes other people's, and develop and promote those ideas until they become an accepted part of daily life. Innovation requires self-confidence, a taste for taking risks, leadership ability and a vision of what the future should be. Henry Ford had all these characteristics, but it took him many years to develop all of them fully.

His beginnings were perfectly ordinary. He was born on his father's farm in what is now Dearborn, Michigan on July 30, 1863. Early on Ford demonstrated some of the characteristics that would make him successful, powerful, and famous. He organized other boys to build rudimentary water wheels and steam engines. He learned about full-sized steam engines by becoming friends with the men who ran them. He taught himself to fix watches, and used the watches as textbooks to learn the rudiments of machine design. Thus, young Ford demonstrated mechanical ability, a facility for leadership, and a preference for learning by trial-and-error. These characteristics would become the foundation of his whole career.

Ford could have followed in his father's footsteps and become a farmer. But young Henry was fascinated by machines and was willing to take risks to pursue that fascination. In 1879 he left the farm to become an apprentice at the Michigan Car Company, a manufacturer of railroad cars in Detroit. Over the next two-and-one-half years he held several similar jobs, sometimes moving when he thought he could learn more somewhere else.

He returned home in 1882 but did little farming. Instead he operated and serviced portable steam engines used by farmers, occasionally worked in factories in Detroit, and cut and sold timber from 40 acres of his father's land. By now Ford was demonstrating another characteristic—a preference for working on his own rather than for somebody else. In 1888 Ford married Clara Bryant and in 1891 they moved to Detroit where Henry had taken a job as night engineer for the Edison Electric Illuminating Company. Ford did not know a great deal about electricity. He saw the job in part as an opportunity to learn.

Henry was an apt pupil, and by 1896 had risen to chief engineer of the Illuminating Company. But he had other interests. He became one of scores of people working in barns and small shops across the country trying to build horseless carriages. Aided by a team of friends, his experiments culminated in 1896 with the completion of his first self-propelled vehicle, the Quadricycle. It had four wire wheels that looked like heavy bicycle wheels, was steered with a tiller like a boat, and had only two forward speeds with no reverse.

A second car followed in 1898. Ford now demonstrated one of the keys to his future success—the ability to articulate a vision and convince other people to sign on and help him achieve that vision. He persuaded a group of businessmen to back him in the biggest risk of his life—a company to make and sell horseless carriages. But Ford knew nothing about running a business, and learning by trial-and-error always involves failure. The new company failed, as did a second. To revive his fortunes Ford took bigger risks, building and even driving racing cars. The success

of these cars attracted additional financial backers, and on June 16, 1903 Henry incorporated his third automotive venture, Ford Motor Company.

The Innovator and Ford Motor Company

The early history of Ford Motor Company illustrates one of Henry Ford's most important talents—an ability to identify and attract outstanding people. He hired a core of young, able men who believed in his vision and would make Ford Motor Company into one of the world's great industrial enterprises. The new company's first car, called the Model A, was followed by a variety of improved models. In 1907 Ford's four-cylinder, \$600 Model N became the best-selling car in the country. But by this time Ford had a bigger vision: a better, cheaper "motorcar for the great multitude." Working with a hand-picked group of employees he came up with the Model T, introduced on October 1, 1908.

The Model T was easy to operate, maintain, and handle on rough roads. It immediately became a huge success. Ford could easily sell all he could make; but he wanted to make all he could sell. Doing that required a bigger factory. In 1910 the company moved into a huge new plant in Highland Park, Michigan, just north of Detroit. There Ford Motor Company began a relentless drive to increase production and lower costs. Henry and his team borrowed concepts from watch makers, gun makers, bicycle makers, and meat packers, mixed them with their own ideas and by late 1913 they had developed a moving assembly line for automobiles. But Ford workers objected to the never-ending, repetitive work on the new line. Turnover was so high that the company had to hire 53,000 people a year to keep 14,000 jobs filled. Henry responded with his boldest innovation ever—in January 1914 he virtually doubled wages to \$5 per day.

At a stroke he stabilized his workforce and gave workers the ability to buy the very cars they made. Model T sales rose steadily as the price dropped. By 1922 half the cars in America were Model Ts and a new two-passenger runabout could be had for as little as \$269.

In 1919, tired of "interference" from the other investors in the company, Henry determined to buy them all out. The result was several new Detroit millionaires and a Henry Ford who was the sole owner of the world's largest automobile company. Ford named his 26-year-old son Edsel as president, but it was Henry who really ran things. Absolute power did not bring wisdom, however.

Success had convinced him of the superiority of his own intuition, and he continued to believe that the Model T was the car most people wanted. He ignored the growing popularity of more expensive but more stylish and comfortable cars

like the Chevrolet, and would not listen to Edsel and other Ford executives when they said it was time for a new model.

By the late 1920s even Henry Ford could no longer ignore the declining sales figures. In 1927 he reluctantly shut down the Model T assembly lines and began designing an all-new car. It appeared in December of 1927 and was such a departure from the old Ford that the company went back to the beginning of the alphabet for a name—they called it the Model A.

The new car would not be produced at Highland Park. In 1917 Ford had started construction on an even bigger factory on the Rouge River in Dearborn, Michigan. Iron ore and coal were brought in on Great Lakes steamers and by railroad. By 1927, all steps in the manufacturing process from refining raw materials to final assembly of the automobile took place at the vast Rouge Plant, characterizing Henry Ford's idea of mass production. In time it would become the world's largest factory, making not only cars but the steel, glass, tires, and other components that went into the cars.

Henry Ford's intuitive decision making and one-man control were no longer the formula for success. The Model A was competitive for only four years before being replaced by a newer design. In 1932, at age 69 Ford introduced his last great automotive innovation, the lightweight, inexpensive V8 engine. Even this was not enough to halt his company's decline. By 1936 Ford Motor Company had fallen to third place in the US market, behind both General Motors and Chrysler Corporation.

In addition to troubles in the marketplace, Ford experienced troubles in the workplace. Struggling during the Great Depression, Ford was forced to lower wages and lay off workers. When the United Auto Workers Union tried to organize Ford Motor Company, Henry wanted no part of such "interference" in running his company. He fought back with intimidation and violence, but was ultimately forced to sign a union contract in 1941.

When World War II began in 1939, Ford, who always hated war, fought to keep the United States from taking sides. But after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor Ford Motor Company became one of the major US military contractors, supplying airplanes, engines, jeeps and tanks.

The influence of the aging Henry Ford, however, was declining. Edsel Ford died in 1943 and two year later Henry officially turned over control of the company to Henry II, Edsel's son. Henry I retired to Fair Lane, his estate in Dearborn, where he died on April 7, 1947 at age 83.

Henry Ford's Legacy

Henry Ford had laid the foundation of the twentieth century. The assembly line became the century's characteristic production mode, eventually applied to everything from phonographs to hamburgers. The vast quantities of war material turned out on those assembly lines were crucial to the Allied victory in World War II. High wage, low skilled factory jobs pioneered by Ford accelerated both immigration from overseas and the movement of Americans from the farms to the cities. The same jobs also accelerated the movement of the same people into an ever-expanding middle class. In a dramatic demonstration of the law of unintended consequences, the creation of huge numbers of low skilled workers gave rise in the 1930s to industrial unionism as a potent social and political force. The Model T spawned mass automobility, altering our living patterns, our leisure activities, our landscape, even our atmosphere.

Why He Innovated

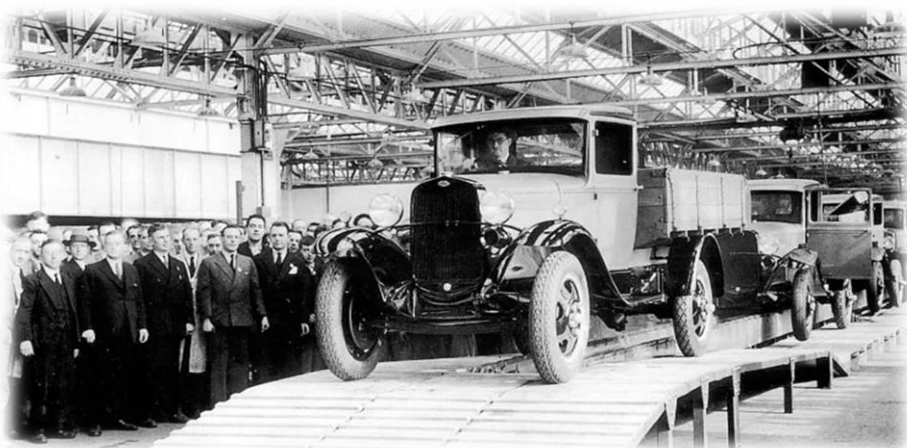
There is a prophetic story of how the 13-year-old Henry Ford got a pocket watch for his birthday, and then proceeded to take it apart. He simply wanted to know how it worked. It was a character trait that marked the rest of Ford's life. He wanted to know how things worked and, just as important, why they didn't work.

Ford was interested in every aspect of life around him. He explored innovative forms of education which, in time, lead to the founding of the Edison Institute, known today as The Henry Ford. In a single location, Ford brought together dozens of buildings and millions of artifacts. It was one of the largest collections of its kind ever assembled, as well as a bold and ambitious new way for people of all ages to discover and explore the richness of the American experience for themselves.

Henry Ford took inspiration from the past, saw opportunities for the future, and believed in technology as a force for improving people's lives. To him, technology wasn't just a source of profits, it was a way to harness new ideas and, ultimately, further democratize American life.



<https://www.britannica.com/money/Henry-Ford>



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<https://www.thehenryford.org/>

Quotations

Henry Ford

Because of his immense popularity during his lifetime and since, numerous sayings have been ascribed to Henry Ford. However, many of these quotes are difficult to properly verify or attribute. Work on collecting and authenticating Henry Ford quotations was begun at Ford Motor Company, possibly as early as the mid-1920s. Staff, interns, and volunteers of the Benson Ford Research Center at The Henry Ford have continued this work, resulting in the list below ([also available as a spreadsheet download](#)).

The list includes quotations that have been traced to a primary source or a reliable secondary source. Examples of reliable secondary sources would be a published interview with or other direct quotations of Henry Ford in newspapers contemporary to him, including but in no way limited to house organs such as the *Ford Times* and *Ford News*, or a book whose ghost-writing or collaboration was authorized by Henry Ford. If you are searching for a quote and do not see it in the attached list, it means that staff was not able to trace it to a reliable source.

<https://www.thehenryford.org/collections-and-research/digital-resources/popular-topics/henry-ford-quotes/>

20 Quotes ...

As the innovative and inspirational go, Henry Ford has to be up there with the finest of all time. The founder of the Ford Motor Company, he converted the automobile from an expensive curiosity into a practical and affordable means of transport that would go on to have a monolithic impact on the landscape of the world as we know it today.

He was a man of ingenuity, passion and many a wise word. Here, we take a look at 20 of his greatest and most profound quotes...

- Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason why so few engage in it.
- ❖ Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.
- ❖ Don't find fault, find a remedy.
- If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right.
- ✓ Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.
- ✓ A business that makes nothing but money is a poor business.
- When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it.
- Quality means doing it right when no one is looking.
- Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes shine to the stars.

❖ Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.

➤ You don't have to hold a position in order to be a leader.

➤ Even a mistake may turn out to be the one thing necessary to a worthwhile achievement.

❖ One of the greatest discoveries a man makes, one of his great surprises, is to find he can do what he was afraid he couldn't do.

✚ If money is your hope for independence, you will never have it. The only real security that a man will have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability.

✚ You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do.

▪ Wealth, like happiness, is never attained when sought after directly. It comes as a by-product of providing a useful service.

➤ There is no man living that cannot do more than he thinks he can.

❖ Money is like an arm or leg - use it or lose it.

❖ Vision without execution is just hallucination.

○ The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing.

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Ford Rouge

Timeline

<https://www.thehenryford.org/visit/ford-rouge-factory-tour/history-and-timeline/timeline/>

Henry Ford had a vision of an ideal automotive "ore to assembly" complex, where every aspect of production could be processed, manufactured and assembled in one place. From tractors to cars, military jeeps, tank engines and even amphibious vehicles, and later celebrated cars like the Ford Mustang, the **Rouge's Production History** stands as a hallmark of the times.

1903	Ford Motor Company founded
1906	Ford Motor Company becomes America's largest car manufacturer producing 8,729 cars
1908	Ford introduces the Model T
1908	William C. Durant forms General Motors
1910	Ford opens the Highland Park Plant
1913	Ford engineers introduce a moving assembly line for auto production
1914	Ford introduces the \$5 day wage for hourly workers
1915	Henry Ford purchases 2,000 acres of marshland along the Rouge River in Dearborn

1917	Construction of Rouge Plant begins
1918	First products of the Rouge are Eagle Boats for the US Navy
1921	Fordson tractor production begins at Rouge Plant
1924	First public tours of the Rouge Plant
1925	Walter P. Chrysler reorganizes Maxwell Motor Corp. into Chrysler Corp.
1926	Ford adopts 40 hour work week
1927	Model T production ends after more than 15 million are produced
1927	Ford loses first place in sales to Chevrolet
1927	Model A production begins at Rouge
1928	Tractor production discontinued at the Rouge
1928	Ford regains first place in sales
1929	Total Rouge employment climbs to 103,000
1932	First V-8 Ford car produced at Rouge
1937	Union organizers stage massive “sit-in” strikes at General Motors’ plants in Flint
1937	Ford Service men attack union organizers in what becomes known as The Battle of the Overpass
1941	Ford signs contract with United Auto Workers, the last major auto company to do so
1942	World War II halts civilian car production

1943-45	War production at the Rouge contributes to Detroit's reputation as "The Arsenal of Democracy"
1945	Ford civilian truck and auto production resumes
1946	75,000 employed at the Rouge
1949	Ford introduces the first all-new cars built at the Rouge since World War II
1953	60,000 employed at the Rouge
1953	The first Ford Thunderbird rolls off the line at the Rouge
1965	Ford Mustang begins production at the Rouge
1965	New yearly record for Rouge Plant Tours set with 239,669 visitors
1971	All-time yearly record for Rouge Plant tours set with 243,175 visitors
1980	Rouge Plant tours end
1997	UAW and Ford Motor Company sign Rouge Viability Agreement to revitalize the Rouge
1999	Six workers are killed in an explosion at the Rouge Power House
2004	New F-150 truck production begins at the Rouge in a newly constructed, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility
2004	Ford Rouge Factory Tours resume
2004	F-Series sets all-new U.S. sales record: 939,511
2008	Ford launches an all-new version of the Ford F-150 and the first ever ultra-luxury F-150 platinum edition

2009	Ford Launched a totally redesigned and updated F-150
2010	Ford launched the SVT Raptor. A dedicated off-road pickup
2011	Ford introduced a new engine line up for the F-150 to include a 3.7-liter V6 and a twin turbocharged 3.5-liter V6 EcoBoost
2014	Ford introduced the Tremor model of the F-150
2015	Ford introduced a completely redesigned F-150 by shedding 700lbs. They introduced a military grade aluminum alloy for the body instead of steel
2017	The 2018 F-150 receives the Motor Trend Truck of the Year
2019	The Diesel Engine becomes optional for Lariat, King Ranch, and Platinum
2021	Ford Unveils 2022 all Electric F-150 Lightning

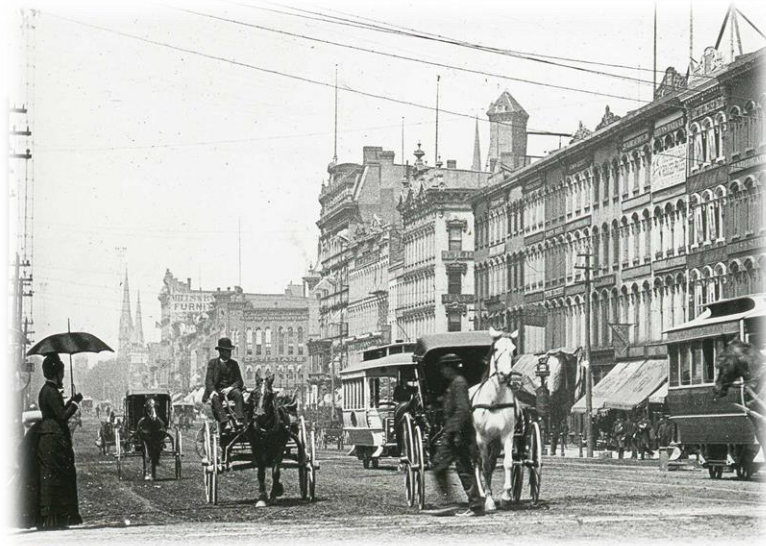


The Life of Henry Ford

TIMELINE



<https://corporate.ford.com/about/history/company-timeline.html>



Downtown Detroit, c. 1880,

July 30, 1863

Henry Ford is born on a farm to William and Mary Ford in Springwells Township, Michigan, located nine miles outside of Detroit.

December 1879

Henry Ford leaves his family farm to pursue his interest in machinery in Detroit. One of his first jobs is at the Flowers Brothers Machine Shop where, for a salary of \$2.50 a week, he shapes brass valves on a milling machine.

April 11, 1888

On her 22nd birthday, Clara Bryant of Greenfield Township marries Henry Ford. Bryant grew up on a farm a few miles northeast of the Ford homestead.



Clara Ford holding baby Edsel,

November 6, 1893

Clara gives birth to a son, Edsel Bryant Ford. The family is living in a rented house on Bagley Avenue in Detroit.

June 4, 1896

After two years of spending nearly every free minute refining his engine in the small shed behind his home, as well as in a basement room at Edison Illuminating, Ford completes his first automobile, the "Quadricycle," and drives it through the streets of Detroit.



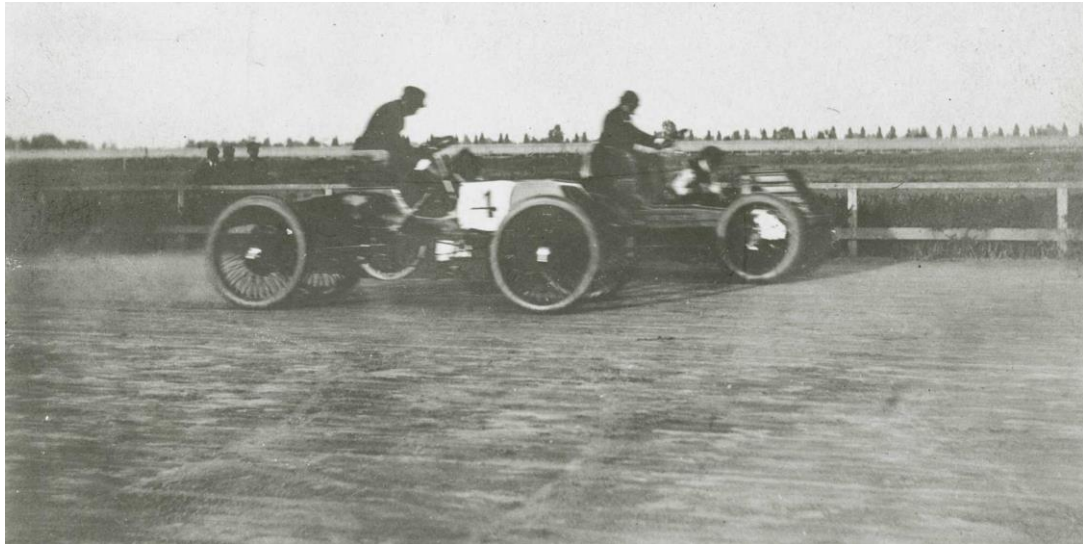
Henry Ford driving the 1896 Quadricycle,

August 5, 1899

With financial investors he has attracted with his quadricycle, Ford forms the Detroit Automobile Company. Over the next several years, Ford will have a number of financial backers, who eventually all become exasperated with his constant attempts to update and improve his models.

October 10, 1901

Ford enters one of his cars in a 10-mile car race in Grosse Pointe, which he wins. His victory makes him the talk of automotive circles. Soon after, he builds a newer, more powerful racer -- the 999 -- which sets an American speed record of five miles in five minutes 28 seconds.



Racing on the Grosse Pointe Track,

June 16, 1903

Henry Ford and his partner Alexander Malcomson, Detroit's largest coal dealer, incorporate the Ford Motor Company with \$28,000 in cash and \$21,000 in promised funds from 10 other investors -- primarily friends, relatives, or business contacts of Malcomson.



The Ford Model N

1903 - 1908

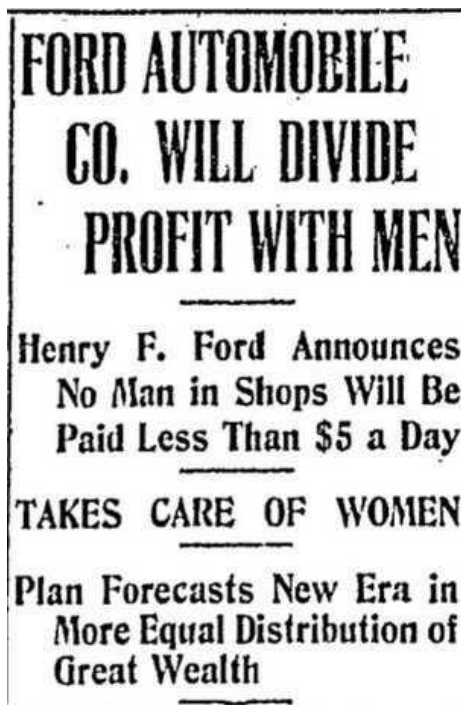
Between 1903 and the 1908 advent of the Model T, Ford's company manufactures nine different cars: Models A, B, AC, C, F, K, N, R, and S. The most successful, the Model N, is described in advertisements as "a high-grade, practical automobile...[raised] out of the list of luxuries." Its skyrocketing sales foreshadow the success of the Model T.

October 1908

Ford introduces the Model T, or "Tin Lizzie," as it came to be known. Within months, demand is so high that the company puts new orders on a hiatus.

Fall 1913

Ford's Highland Park factory begins operating the first moving automobile assembly line in the world. By the end of the year, Highland Park will employ about 13,000 men.



Ford's announcement made headlines,

January 5, 1914

Ford Motor announces the \$5/day wage for an eight-hour work day. Replacing the previous pay rate of \$2.34 for a nine-hour day, it was twice what could be earned at any other auto company. The following day, 10,000 job seekers clamor for jobs at Highland Park.

April 1914

After watching an outside movie company film a newsreel in his factory, Ford becomes intrigued by the possibilities for publicity and establishes his own moving picture department. Its two-man staff quickly grows to be a full-service production company of over 25, with its own fleet of modern 35mm cameras and a film processing and editing lab at Highland Park. Their first film, *How Henry Ford Makes One Thousand Cars a Day*, would be released that summer.

Spring 1915

Henry Ford begins secretly buying hundreds of acres of farmland along the River Rouge to build what would become known as the Rouge Plant.



Henry Ford, before setting sail on the peace ship, Oscar II

November 24, 1915

Henry Ford calls a press conference to announce his plan to end World War 1. Known as Ford's "Peace Ship" expedition, the plan includes chartering an ocean liner and sailing to Europe to convince the warring nations to stop fighting. The stunt is ultimately a failure.

December 1915

Henry and Clara Ford move into Fair Lane, a 1,300-acre estate in Dearborn, Michigan.

November 1, 1916

Edsel Ford, age 22, marries Eleanor Clay, niece of the founder of Hudson's, Detroit's preeminent department store.

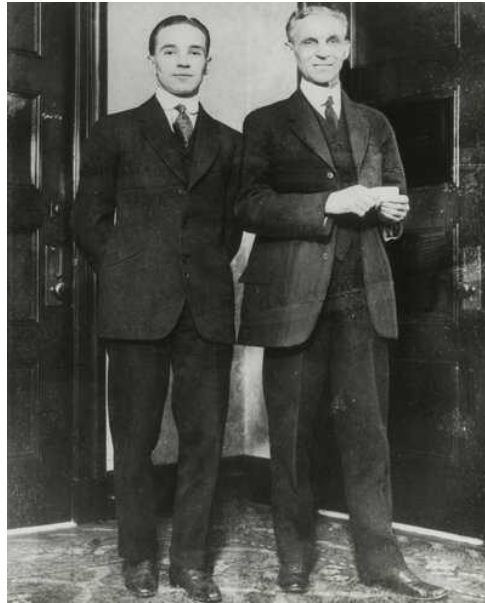
November 2, 1916

John and Horace Dodge, two of Ford's original investors, file a lawsuit against the directors of the Ford Motor Company charging that the company violated the interests of its stockholders. Ford receives an injunction forbidding him from using company funds to build the new plant.

December 30, 1918

Henry Ford suddenly resigns from the presidency of the Ford Motor

Company. His 25-year-old son Edsel is elected to the role, and assumes the presidency on New Year's Day, 1919.



Henry and Edsel Ford,

March 5, 1919

Henry Ford declares that he is starting a rival automobile company which will produce a stripped-down version of the Model T to be sold for \$250-\$300. The announcement excites the public but alarms the seven remaining Ford Motor Company stockholders. In a panic over the thought of losing sales to Ford's new company, they sell their stocks.

By July, Ford's announcement is revealed to be a trick: his agents had purchased all of the stocks and there would be no rival automobile company. For the first time, the Ford family controls every last share in the Ford Motor Company. And while Edsel may be president in name, Henry still retains power.



Henry Ford on the stand,

Summer 1919

Ford takes the stand in a suit he brought against the *Chicago Tribune*. Ford had sued the *Tribune* for libel after the paper called him an "ignorant idealist ... and an anarchist enemy of the nation." Newspapers from across the country covered the trial in breathless detail as Ford was subjected to eight days of questioning. Though Ford won the trial, the press ridiculed the automaker for his lack of historical knowledge and inarticulate performance on the witness stand.



The article that signaled the beginning of Henry Ford's seven-year hate campaign against the Jews. (COLLECTIONS OF THE HENRY FORD MUSEUM, GREENFIELD VILLAGE)

Henry Ford's article in *The Dearborn Independent*,
Harvard University, Widener Library

May 22, 1920

Ford begins publishing a controversial series of articles in the *Dearborn Independent*, under the bold headline "The International Jew: The World's Problem." He had purchased the newspaper a year and a half earlier.

January 20, 1926

Henry Ford receives a memo from Ernest Kanzler, a Ford VP and Edsel's brother-in-law, expressing what he, Edsel, and most Ford executives believe: that the Ford Motor Company should end the production of the Model T because of falling sales numbers and build a new, improved model.

The memo represents growing frustration among executives and a time many would recall as the tensest years in the company. In response to the

memo, Ford, not used to opposition, humiliates Kanzler at every opportunity and forces him out of the company within months.



Henry and Edsel driving the 15 millionth Model T,

May 26, 1927

The 15-millionth Model T ceremoniously rolls off the assembly line at Highland Park as Henry and Edsel pose for the cameras.

The same day, Ford announces the company will begin producing a brand new vehicle -- the Model A. Ford had given in to pressure from Edsel and other executives and agreed to discontinue the Model T after mass-producing the vehicle for 15 years.

Spring - Fall 1927

Highland Park is shut down for six months to prepare for production of the new vehicle, the Model A. The project is immense: almost 75% of all existing tools need to be scrapped, rebuilt or refurbished for the new model. Sixty thousand workers are laid off. In the end, it would cost nearly \$250 million before the first Model A is assembled on October 21.

September 30, 1927

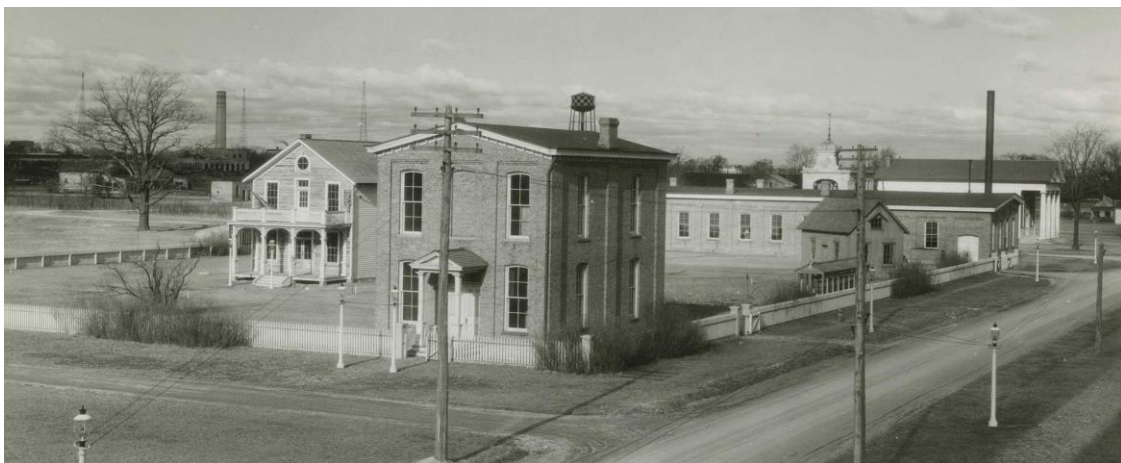
Henry Ford purchases land in Brazil to establish rubber plantations in what would become known as "Fordlandia."



Workers at River Rouge

Late 1927

Eight years after construction began, Ford's enormous River Rouge factory complex begins full-scale automobile production. The vertically-integrated factory is Henry Ford's vision realized: entire finished vehicles could be built from scratch using raw materials owned and supplied by the Ford Motor Company without dependence on outside suppliers. Ford had once told a colleague that he "wanted the raw materials coming in on one end of the Rouge plant and the finished cars going out the other end."



Edison's Menlo Park compound at Greenfield Village

October 21, 1929

Thomas Edison and President Herbert Hoover attend Ford's "Light's Golden Jubilee," an elaborate ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of Edison's incandescent lamp.

As part of the ceremony, Ford unveils the Thomas Edison Institute (now the Henry Ford Museum) and Greenfield Village, which would grow to showcase hundreds of historic buildings and artifacts that Ford had meticulously purchased, dismantled, and reassembled as a recreated rural town -- Ford's deeply nostalgic commemoration of America's past.

October 29, 1929

The stock market crashes and the Great Depression hits the U.S.

December 1, 1929

Henry Ford institutes the \$7 day in an effort to aid his workers and fend off the effects of the Depression, but it is to no avail: between 1929 and 1932, Ford must lay off nearly half of his workforce.



Ford security attacking a UAW organizer

May 26, 1937

The Ford security staff violently attacks United Auto Worker (UAW) members handing out pro-union leaflets at the Rouge. The altercation, which was captured by photographers, became known as "The Battle of the Overpass."

July 29, 1938

The day before Ford's 75th birthday on July 30, Henry, Clara and a crowd of 40,000 spectators attend a pageant at Ford Field in Dearborn, in which 700 performers re-enact scenes from Ford's life.



Men picket outside Ford during the strike

April 1941

Outside the Rouge, 50,000 Ford employees refuse to work until Ford agrees to meet union demands calling for higher wages, overtime pay, and job security. Ford declares he would rather shut down his factories than give in to the union.

June 1941

Under pressure from Edsel, the unions, and the government, whose war contracts were at stake, Ford finally signs an agreement with union officials. He gives the UAW everything it wants and more -- a union shop, wages equal to the highest in the industry, and union dues deducted from workers' paychecks.

May 26, 1943

Edsel Ford dies at age 49 from incurable stomach cancer.

June 1, 1943

Henry Ford is re-elected president of Ford Motor Company.



Henry II, Henry, and Edsel in the 1940s

Early 1945

Ford suffers a debilitating stroke while on a trip to Richmond Hill, his estate in Georgia. After returning to Fair Lane, Ford remains mentally and physically languid, often failing to recognize old friends and associates, and is carefully kept out of the public eye.

November 5, 1945

Henry Ford II, Edsel's oldest son and president of Ford Motor Company for just six weeks, sells Fordlandia back to the Brazilian government for a fraction of its value.

April 7, 1947

Henry Ford dies at Fair Lane at age 83.

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FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Ford Motor Company



[Ford World Headquarters](#) in [Dearborn, Michigan](#)

Company type [Public](#)

Traded as

- [NYSE: F](#)
- [S&P 100](#) component
- [S&P 500](#) component

Industry [Automotive](#)

Predecessor [Henry Ford Company](#)

Founded June 16, 1903; 121 years ago in [Detroit](#), [Michigan](#), [U.S.](#)^[1]

Founder [Henry Ford](#)

Headquarters [Ford World Headquarters, Dearborn](#), Michigan
,
U.S.

Area served Worldwide

Key people

- [William Clay Ford Jr.](#) ([executive chairman](#))
- [Jim Farley](#) ([president](#) & [CEO](#))

Products

- [Automobiles](#)
- [Performance vehicles](#)
- [Luxury vehicles](#)
- [Commercial vehicles](#)
- [Automotive parts](#)

Production output ▲ 4.4 million vehicles (2023)

Brands

- Ford
- [Lincoln](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorcraft
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automotive finance • Vehicle leasing • Vehicle service
Revenue	▲ US\$ 176.2 billion (2023)
Operating income	▲ US\$5.46 billion (2023)
Net income	▲ US\$4.33 billion (2023)
Total assets	▲ US\$273.3 billion (2023)
Total equity	▼ US\$42.80 billion (2023)
Owner	Ford family (2% equity; 40% voting power)
Number of employees	177,000 (2023)
Divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ford Blue • Ford Model E • Ford Pro
Subsidiaries	show List
Website	ford.com
Footnotes / references	
[2] [3] [4] [5]	



The Ford Motor Company was officially incorporated in 1903, when founder [Henry Ford](#) launched his venture in a converted factory on Mack Avenue in Detroit. It was his third attempt at establishing an automotive business. At the time, the company could only produce a few cars a day.

Ford had its breakthrough in 1908 with the introduction of the Model T. It embodied what Henry Ford wanted out of a car: efficiency, reliability, and a reasonable price. Due to high demand for the vehicle, Ford Motor Company commissioned a new factory in Highland Park, Michigan, designed by Albert Kahn. It is here that Ford revolutionized the automobile industry by introducing his first assembly line mass-production model. Individual workers stayed in one place and performed the same task on vehicles that passed in front of them. This implementation gave Ford an edge over its competitors.

In 1914, Ford began offering a \$5 a day wage to its factory employees. This vaulted many low-skilled workers into the middle class, allowing them to afford the products that they made, and employee turnover dropped dramatically. During the 1920s, the Ford Motor Company purchased the Lincoln Motor Company and moved much of its production operations to the Ford Rouge Complex in Dearborn, Michigan. By the end of the decade, two out of three cars on the road were a Model T. The Ford Motor Company played a pivotal role in the Allied campaign during World War II. Using the same mass production techniques it introduced to the auto industry, Ford began churning out B-24 Liberator aircraft at the rate of one per hour or approximately 600 every month at Willow Run, helping to spawn Detroit's nickname, the Arsenal of Democracy.

The 1950s and 1960s saw the introduction of some of Ford's most iconic vehicles, including the Thunderbird in 1955 and the Mustang in 1964. This period also saw the introduction and unfortunate demise of the Edsel, a luxury car that never caught on with the public. Throughout the next several decades, Ford Motor Company continued to expand, opening operations in Asia, founding the Ford Motor Credit Company and acquiring other brands, including Mazda and Land Rover. In 2008 Ford alone, of the big three American automakers, avoided bankruptcy and a government bailout. Ford remains one of the largest car producers in the world.

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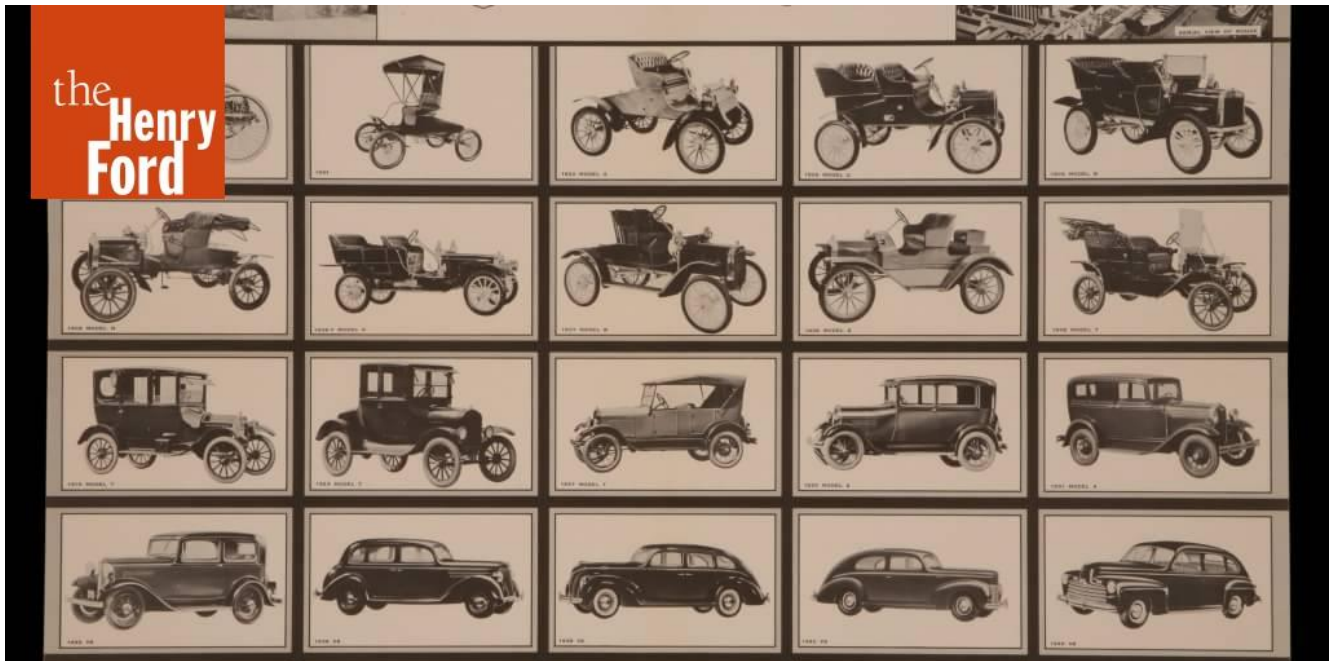
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List of Ford Vehicles



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Ford_vehicles

Summary of Vehicles Produced

- [A] Current Production >>> 38
- [B] Period: 1900-1929 >>> 10
- [C] Period: 1930-1939 >>> 15
- [D] Period: 1940-1949 >>> 5
- [E] Period: 1950-1959 >>> 22
- [F] Period: 1960-1969 >>> 20
- [G] Period: 1970-1979 >>> 16
- [H] Period: 1980-1989 >>> 22
- [I] Period: 1990-1999 >>> 14
- [J] Period: 2000-2009 >>> 18
- [K] Period: 2010-2019 >>> 7

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Other Technical Details

Tractors

- [N-series](#)
- [NAA](#) (a.k.a.; Golden Jubilee)
- 600 Series
- Workmaster
- Powermaster

Ford *000 "Thousand" series

- 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, 5000, 6000, 7000, 8000, and 9000

Ford *600 "Six-Hundred" and *700 "Seven-Hundred" series

- 1600, 2600, 3600, 4600, 5600, 6600, 7600 (Four cylinder, utility, straddle mount)
- 5700, 6700, 7700 (Row-crop versions of their 600 series counterparts)
- 8600, 9600 (Six-cylinder row-crop)
- 8700, 9700 (Later version of their 600 series counterparts.)

Also, since the 8000 and up models were only made in the US, the 8100 and 8200 models were produced in Europe to meet the market's need for a 100 hp+ tractor. This was done by using the 7600 transmission and rear end and mating it to the Ford six-cylinder industrial engine with a special [cast iron](#) subframe for added strength.

Ford **10 series

- 2810, 2910, 3610, 3910, 4110, 4610, 5110, 5610, 6610, 6710, 7410, 7610, 7710, 7910, and 8210 (Mark I, II and III)
- 7810, 6810, and 6410 (Mark II and III)

Ford TW series

- TW10, TW20, and TW30
- TW5, TW15, TW25, and TW35
- TW15 Mark II, TW25 Mark II, and TW 35 Mark II

Ford **30 Utility series

- 3230, 3430, 3930, 3930 turbo, 4130, 4630, 4630 turbo, 4830, and 5030 (small tractors)

Ford 8*30 Powershift series

- 8530, 8630, 8730, and 8830 (140-190 hp)(Mark III)

Ford **40 series

- 5640, 6640, 7740, 7840, 8240, and 8340

In 1986, [Ford Motor Company](#) expanded its agricultural holdings when it purchased the Sperry-New Holland implement line from [Sperry Corporation](#), and named their agricultural division Ford New Holland Inc. The following year, [Versatile](#) was purchased, giving Ford a complete agricultural lineup. In 1988 [Ford Motor Company](#) sold 80% of Ford-New Holland Inc. to [Fiat](#), and in 1991 Fiat acquired the remaining 20%, with the agreement to stop using the Ford brand by 2000. By 1999, [Fiat](#) had discontinued the use of both its own and the Ford name, and united them both under the [New Holland](#) brand.

Buses

- 70 (1936–1937)
- 81-B (1937–1938)
- 91-B (1938–1939)
- [09-B](#) (1939–1940)
- [19-B](#) (1940–1941)
- [29-B](#) (1941–1942)
- [49-B](#) (1944)
- [59-B](#) (1945–1947)
- [69-B](#) (1946–1947)
- [79-B](#) (1945–1947)

School bus - for North American market

- [Ford Transit Bus](#) (1936–1947)
- Various third party manufactures use Ford E-series and F-series chassis to build mini school buses used in Canada and the United States:
 - Ford Minibus using F450 chassis
 - Ford Minibus using E350 (formerly Econoline 350)
 - Ford E450 Super Duty minibus
 - Ford MB series minibus - IV models 100, 100A, 200 and 200C Super Duty
 - Ford MBC series buses IV models 200, 200C, 300, 300D, 800
- [Ford B-Series](#) Type C conventional chassis used by third party manufactures to build full size school buses for [North American](#) market

Commercial bus

- Ford Specialty Trolley - classic North American trolley car shell with Ford truck chassis; used as tourist shuttle buses

Transit/suburban bus

- Ford G997
- [Ford R-Series](#) - for [European](#) market 1960s to 1980s
- Ford Trader
- Ford Hawke

- Ford ET7 with Casha bodywork
- Ford 19B, 29B
- Ford 72B
- Ford ET7 Aqualina

Military

Ford was a military contractor for North American and European clients during World War I and II:

- 1917 Ford Model-T - World War I ambulance
- [M1918](#) ^[n11 1]
- Universal Carrier MK. I and MK. II
- T16 Universal Carrier
- [T17 Deerhound](#) armored car
- [M8 Greyhound](#) armored car
- Bomb service truck - based on Model 19F light truck
- [GTB](#) ("Burma Jeep") ^[n11 2]
- [GP / GPW](#) ^[n11 3] (1941–1945)
- [GPA](#)
- M38CDN
- M38A1CDN
- [M151](#) (jeep)
- [M656](#)
- Many versions of trucks and cars built by Ford in Canada for military during WWII. e.g. Ford F8, F15, F15A, F30, F60S, F60L, FAT, C11ADF etc.
- Ford produced multiple types of trucks in Germany for military during WWII. e.g. Ford G917T, G987T, G997T and G987T ^[1]

Notes

1. ^ World War I light tank used Model-T engines.
2. ^ Medium duty truck, 1+1/2 Ton 4X4; used for cargo and other tasks by USN and US Marine Corps during World War II.
3. ^ The MB by [Willys-Overland](#). Limited pre-production version of 1/4 Ton 4x4. Included 4-wheel steer version.
4. ^ [amphibious](#) Ford variant of [Willys MB](#) during World War II.
5. ^ Standard Five-ton truck in April 1966.

Concept and movie cars

- [Ford 021C](#) (1999)
- Ford 24.7 Coupe (2000)
- Ford 24.7 Pickup (2000)
- Ford 24.7 Wagon (2000)
- [Ford 4-Trac](#) (2006)
- Ford 427 (2003)
- Ford AC (1982)

- Ford Adrenalin (1996)
- [Ford Aerostar](#) (1984)
- Ford Aerovan (1981, 1982)
- Ford AFV (Alternative Fuel Vehicle) (1982)
- [Ford Airstream](#) (2007)
- Ford Allegro (1963)
- Ford Allegro II (1967)
- Ford Alpe (1996)
- Ford Altair (1983)
- Ford APV (1984)
- Ford Ariosio (1994)
- [Ford Atlas](#) (2013)
- Ford Avantgarde (1981)
- Ford Aurora (1964)
- Ford Aurora II (1969)
- [Ford B-Max](#) (2011)
- Ford Barchetta (1983)
- Ford Bordinat Cobra (1965)
- Ford Brezza (1982)
- [Ford Boss Bronco](#) (1992)
- [Ford Bronco](#) (2004)
- [Ford Bronco](#) Badlands Sasquatch 2-door (2021)
- [Ford Bronco](#) + Filson Wildland Fire Rig (2020)
- [Ford Bronco DM-1](#) (1988)
- [Ford Bronco Dune Duster](#) (1966–1968)
- [Ford Bronco Wildflower](#) (1971)
- [Ford Bronco Montana Lobo](#) (1981)
- [Ford Carousel](#) (1972)
- Ford Cobra 230 ME (1986)
- Ford City Star (1970)
- Ford Cockpit (1982)
- Ford Coins (1974)
- [Ford Comuta](#) (1967)
- Ford Connecta (1992)
- Ford Contour (1991)
- Ford Corrida (1978)
- Ford Cougar (1956)
- [Ford Cougar 406](#) (1962)
- Ford Cougar II (1963)
- [Ford Courier F1](#) (1998)
- Ford DePaolo (1958)
- [Ford Desert Excursion](#) (2000)
- [Ford e.go](#) (2000, Vietnam)^[2]
- Ford Econocar (1982)

- [Ford EcoSport](#) (2012)
- Ford Econoline Apartment (1966)
- Ford Econoline Chicane (1996)
- Ford Econoline Kilimanjaro (1970)
- Ford Eltec (1985)
- Ford Equator (2001, 2005)
- [Ford Escape Hybrid](#) (2003)
- Ford ESV (Experimental Safety Vehicle) (1972)
- Ford EVent (1994)
- [Ford Evos](#) (2011)
- [Ford EX](#) (2001)
- [Ford Expedition Everest](#) (2002)
- [Ford Explorer America](#) (2008)
- Ford Explorer Desk Drive (1990)
- [Ford Explorer Drifter](#) (1992)
- [Ford Explorer Sportsman](#) (2001)
- [Ford Explorer Sport-Trac](#) (2005)
- [Ford Explorer Sport-Trac Adrenalin](#) (2005)
- Ford Explorer Surf (1990)
- Ford Explorer SUV (1973)
- Ford F-150 Lightning Rod (2001)
- Ford F-150 Street (1990)
- [Ford F-150 SVT Lightning](#) (2003)
- [Ford F-250 Super Chief](#) (2006)
- [Ford FAB1 \(modified Thunderbird\)](#)
- Ford Faction (2003)
- [Ford Fairlane](#) (2005)
- Ford Fiera (1968)
- Ford Fiesta Bebop (1990)
- Ford Fiesta Fantasy (1978)
- Ford Fiesta GTX (1980)
- [Ford Fiesta RS](#) (2004)
- [Ford Fiesta ST](#) (2011)
- Ford Fiesta Tuareg (1978)
- Ford Fiesta Urba (1989)
- Ford Flair (1982)
- Ford Flashback (1975)
- Ford Focus (1992, 1998, [2004](#))
- [Ford Focus C-Max](#) (2002)
- Ford Focus FCV (2001)
- Ford Focus H2RV (2003)
- [Ford Focus MA](#) (2002)
- Ford Focus Vignale (2004)
- [Ford Forty-Nine](#) (2001)

- [Ford Freestyle FX](#) (2003)
- [Ford FX-Atmos](#) (1954)
- Ford Galaxie GT A Go-Go (1966)
- Ford GloCar (2003)
- [Ford Granada Altair](#) (1980)
- Ford GTK (1979)
- Ford GT-P (1966)
- [Ford GT40](#) (2002)
- [Ford GT70](#) (1971)
- Ford GT80 (1978)
- [Ford GT90](#) (1995)
- [Ford GTX1](#) (2005)
- [Ford Gyron](#) (1961)
- [Ford HFX Aerostar](#) (1987)
- [Ford HySeries Edge](#) (2007)
- [Ford Indigo](#) (1996)
- [Ford Interceptor](#) (2007)
- [Ford Iosis](#) (2005)
- [Ford Iosis X](#) (2006)
- [Ford Iosis MAX](#) (2009)
- Ford IXG (1960)
- Ford La Galaxie (1958)
- Ford La Tosca (1955)
- Ford Libre (1998)
- Ford LTD Black Pearl (1966)
- Ford LTD Berline I (1971)
- Ford LTD Berline II (1972)
- Ford LTD Experimental Safety Vehicle (1973)
- Ford Lucano (1978)
- Ford Lynx (1996)
- [Ford Mach I Levacar](#) (1959)
- Ford Mach 2 (1967)
- [Ford Magic Cruiser](#) (1966)
- Ford Manx (1975)
- Ford Maverick Runabout (1970)
- Ford Maverick Estate Coupe (1971)
- Ford Maverick LTD (1972)
- Ford Maxima (1963)
- [Ford Maya](#) (1984)
- [Ford Maya II ES](#) (1985)
- [Ford Maya II EM](#) (1985)
- Ford Megastar (1977)
- Ford Megastar II (1978)
- Ford Microsport (1978)

- Ford Mighty F-350 Tonka (2002)
- Ford MiniMax (1976)
- [Ford Model U](#) (2003)
- Ford Muroc (1950)
- [Ford Mustang I](#) (1962)
- [Ford Mustang II](#) (1963)
- [Ford Mustang II Sportiva](#) (1974)
- Ford Mustang III (1978)
- [Ford Mustang Fastback/Convertible](#) (2004)
- Ford Mustang Ghia Vignale (1984)
- [Ford Mustang Giugiaro](#)
- Ford Mustang IMSA (1980)
- Ford Mustang Mach I (1965)
- [Ford Mustang Mach II](#) (1970)
- [Ford Mustang Mach III](#) (1993)
- [Ford Mustang Milano](#) (1970)
- Ford Mustang RSX (1979)^[3]
- Ford Mustang PPG (1984)
- Ford Mustela II (1973)
- Ford Mystere (1955)
- Ford Navarre (1980)
- [Ford Nucleon](#) (1958)
- Ford P2000 (1999)
- Ford Pinto Sportiva (1973)
- Ford Plastic Car (1941)
- [Ford Pockar](#) (1981)
- [Ford Powerforce](#) (1997)
- Ford Powerstroke (1994)
- Ford Prima (1976)
- [Ford Probe I](#) (1979)
- [Ford Probe II](#) (1980)
- [Ford Probe III](#) (1981)
- [Ford Probe IV](#) (1982)
- [Ford Probe V](#) (1985)
- [Ford Prodigy](#) (2000)
- [Ford Profile](#) (1994)
- Ford Prototype (Colani) (1989)
- Ford Quicksilver (1982)
- Ford Ranchero Scrambler (1969)
- Ford Ranger II (1967)
- Ford Ranger III (1968)
- Ford Ranger Baja Baby (1997)
- [Ford Ranger Force 5](#) (1991)
- Ford Ranger Jukebox (1993)

- Ford Ranger Powerforce (1999)
- Ford Ranger Sandcourt (1997)
- Ford Ranger Sea Splash/Sky Splash (1994)
- [Ford Reflex](#) (2006)
- [Ford Rox](#) (1997)
- Ford S2RV (Smart Safe Research Vehicle) (2002)
- [Ford SAV](#) (2005)
- [Ford Saetta](#) (1996)
- Ford Saguaro (1988)
- [Ford Santa Fe](#) (1998)
- [Ford Seattle-ite XXI](#) (1962)
- Ford Selene II (1962)
- [Ford Shelby Cobra](#) (2004)
- [Ford Shelby GR-1](#) (2004)
- [Ford SHO-Star](#) (1995)
- Ford Shoccc Wave (1990)
- Ford Shuttler (1981)
- Ford Splash (1988)
- Ford Sportiva II (1974)
- Ford Start (2001)
- [Ford Surf](#) (1990)
- Ford sub-B (1993)
- [Ford Super Chief](#) (2006)
- Ford Super Cobra (1969)
- Ford Super Gnat (1981)
- Ford Synergy 2010 (1996)
- Ford Synthesis 2010 (1993)
- [Ford SYNUS](#) (2005)
- Ford Syrtis (1953)
- Ford Techna (1968)
- [Ford TH!NK](#)
- Ford Thunderbird Italien (1963)
- Ford Thunderbird Golden Palomino (1964)
- Ford Thunderbird Town Landau (1965)
- Ford Thunderbird Saturn I (1968)
- Ford Thunderbird Saturn II (1969)
- Ford Thunderbird PPG (1984)
- [Ford Thunderbird](#) (1999)
- [Ford Thunderbird](#) Sports Roadster (2001)
- [Ford Thunderbird](#) SuperCharged (2003)
- Ford Topaz (1982)
- Ford Torino Machete Style I (1968)
- Ford Torino Machete Style II (1969)
- [Ford Transit Connect](#) Family One (2009)

- [Ford Transit Connect](#) Taxi (2008)
- [Ford Tridon](#) (1971)
- Ford Trio (1983)
- Ford Turbine Truck (1964)
- [Ford Turing Ka](#) (1998)
- Ford Twister (1963)
- Ford Urban Car (1975)
- Ford Urby (1985)
- [Ford Vertrek](#) (2011)
- Ford Via (1989)
- Ford Vivace (1996)
- Ford Vignale TSX-4 (1984)
- Ford Vignale TSX-6 (1986)
- [Ford Visos](#) (2003)
- [Ford Vega](#) (1953)
- [Ford Verve](#) (2007–2008)
- Ford Volante (1958)
- Ford X-100 (1953)
- Ford X-1000 (1958)
- Ford X-2000 (1958)
- Ford XP Bordinat Cobra (1965)
- Ford Zag (1990)
- Ford Zig (1990)



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'Fordism' and the Moving Assembly Line

Ford did not invent the assembly line, but in borrowing the conveyor belt and production processes from industries such as meatpacking, he did revolutionize it. Rather than workers needing to move around the factory and the vehicle as they built it, the vehicle was built as it literally moved along the production line.

The introduction of increased wages, leisure time, and access to the affordable Model T are often cited as influential in the creation of America's [middle class](#). Ford famously increased wages for his employees, paying them enough that they were able to afford to buy his cars and creating a workspace that was more likely to retain workers for longer.

The term "Fordism" speaks to the impact of Ford's industrial innovations and refers to the contemporary era's feverish pace of mass production and consumption in the postwar era. It is no coincidence that Aldous Huxley chose Ford's name to signify a sort of religious figure in his 1932 science fiction novel, "Brave New World." References to "Ford," "fordliness," and "Our Ford" throughout accent Huxley's dystopian portrayal of mass culture.

Stance on War, and Antisemitism

During World War I, Ford was an active pacifist, funding a ship in 1915 called the Oscar II that journeyed to neutral European countries in an effort to mediate and promote peace. However, Ford's pacifism had a troubling expression in terms of his larger worldview. In 1918, he purchased the local newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, and in 1920, started publishing a series of antisemitic articles, which would continue over the next few years and were carried in 91 issues of the paper in total.

The newspaper campaign portrayed Jewish people as scapegoats for World War I, as well as anything and everything he came to take issue with, from modern music to economic upheaval. Though Ford's views might seem to be situated within his contemporary context and the atmosphere of xenophobia in late 19th and early 20th century America, he went to great lengths to publish and participate in antisemitic discourse. He collected the series of articles into a four-volume set titled "The

International Jew” and printed and distributed half a million copies, some via subscription.

Ford also reprinted “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion” in *The Dearborn Independent*. The piece was a forged document claiming to reveal a conspiracy of Jewish world domination, but Ford printed it as if it were a factual article. The reach and influence of his newspaper were immense for what would otherwise have been a small-town publication, given Ford’s reputation and the fact that his network of dealerships across the country carried the paper. He was even considered as a candidate for the American presidency in the 1920s.

In 1924, Ford was sued for libel by a Jewish American activist, Aaron Sapiro, regarding an article Ford had published in *The Dearborn Independent*. Shortly before the trial, Ford closed the newspaper and settled the case outside of court with Sapiro, paying him a cash settlement and releasing a formal apology written by a mediator and the president of the American Jewish Committee, Louis Marshall.

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Failing for Success

Henry A Ford

“Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again,
this time more intelligently.”

<<< Henry A. Ford

Henry Ford is one of the most renowned entrepreneurs in history. He optimized transportation and forever changed the United States automobile industry. His innovative manufacturing process produced low-cost, reliable vehicles, while simultaneously keeping his workers well-paid and loyal.

Before his success, however, Ford encountered failure during initial production of his first automobile. His investors got cold feet over Ford’s meticulousness, and he was unable to find solid financial backing for the automobile in his first two ventures. Nonetheless, Ford used the lessons from these failures to instruct his future success as an inventor and a businessman.

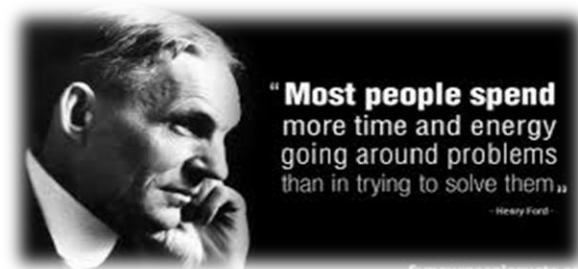
1800s no one had established a standard business model for the automobile industry. Ford convinced William H. Murphy, a Detroit businessman, to back his automobile production. The Detroit Automobile Company resulted from this union, but problems arose shortly after its creation. In 1901, a year and a half after the company began operations, Murphy and the shareholders got restless. Ford wanted to create the perfect automobile design, but the board saw little results. Soon after, they dissolved the company.

Ford recalibrated his efforts after his first failure. He realized that his previous automobile design depended on serving numerous consumer needs. He convinced Murphy to give him a second chance, a rare occurrence in the early 20th century. However, their second venture, the Henry Ford Company, stumbled from the start. Ford felt that Murphy pressured him to prepare the automobile for production and set unrealistic expectations from the beginning. Shortly after Murphy brought in an outside manager to supervise Ford's process, Ford left the company and everyone wrote him off.

These two failures could have been career-ending, but Ford continued. Several years after the second parting with Murphy, Ford met Alexander Malcomson, a coal magnate with a risk-taking spirit like Ford. Malcomson gave Ford full control over his production, and the company introduced the Model A in 1904.

For Henry Ford, failure did not hinder innovation, but served as the impetus to hone his vision for a technology that would ultimately transform the world.

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